

MEDICAL TUITION POLICY

June 2018

Visit: warrington.gov.uk/askollie

INTRODUCTION

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 provides that each local authority should make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness... may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.

The Equality Act 2010 also provides a context to local authority policies in relation to education for children with medical needs.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Department for Education has produced two statutory guidance publications for schools and local authorities in relation to pupils with health / medical needs.

Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs – Statutory guidance for local authorities, January 2013

“The Government’s policy intention is that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting should receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures.”

It states that “...where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the LA is responsible for arranging provision...”.

The DfE acknowledges that in some circumstances medical tuition might be delivered by the child’s school if more appropriate or if the child is able to access school for all or part of the day:

“There will be a wide range of circumstances where a child has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs without the intervention of the LA – for example, where the child can still attend school with some support; where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the child; or where arrangements have been made for the child to be educated in a hospital by an on-site hospital school. We would not expect the LA to become involved in such arrangements unless it had reason to think that the education being provided to the child was not suitable or, while otherwise suitable, was not full-time or for the number of hours the child could benefit from without adversely affecting their health. This might be the case where, for example, the child can attend school but only intermittently.

The guidance states that local authorities must:

Arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child’s health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

The guidance states that local authorities should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2013), allows them to take appropriate qualifications,

prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. ‘Hard and fast’ rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.

“Suitable” means suitable to the child’s age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs that he or she may have.

The law does not define full-time education but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.

Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, LAs should provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child’s best interests. Full and part-time education should still aim to achieve good academic attainment particularly in English, Maths and Science.

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England, December 2015

Key points of the guidance:

- Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.
- Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions.
- Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.

PURPOSE OF THE MEDICAL TUITION SERVICE

The Warrington Medical Tuition Service provides temporary educational support for pupils who are unable to attend school for medical reasons. The purpose is to minimise disruption to education for children who are physically ill, injured or have mental health difficulties. The service aims to provide as much curriculum access as possible to enable these pupils to return smoothly to school as soon as their health permits.

To qualify for medical tuition a pupil must satisfy all the following criteria:

- Expected to be absent for at least 15 school days
- The pupil must live within the Warrington Borough Council area
- The pupil must be of compulsory school age (funding is available until the end of Year 11).
- A written recommendation must be obtained from a hospital consultant, senior clinical medical officer or specialist medical team stating that the child is unable to attend school and medical tuition is appropriate.

ELIGIBILITY

Pupils who are expected to be absent from school for more than 15 school days are eligible to receive support once the Medical Tuition Co-ordinator has received a written recommendation from the school and from the appropriate medical authority. This must confirm that the child is unable to attend school and clearly request that medical tuition should be allocated.

Recommendations in relation to physical illness or injury are generally sought from the senior clinical medical officer or hospital consultant who has been treating the child. Where a child is suffering from severe emotional or psychological issues which prevent attendance at school, a recommendation will be sought from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

REFERRAL

Every school has a member of staff with responsibility for pupils who cannot attend because of medical needs. This member of staff should contact the Medical Tuition Service promptly and submit the appropriate referral forms. Occasionally requests for medical tuition support comes directly from the child's specialist/hospital consultant or the medical team at the hospital where they are being treated.

The stages below illustrate the normal process and procedures which operate:

1. Referral made to the Warrington Medical Tuition Service from the child's school with the supporting recommendation from the appropriate medical profession.
2. The school arranges a meeting with all stake-holders to plan the details of education provision.
3. Tutor is allocated and tuition commences.
4. For long term cases, the medical tuition arrangements will be reviewed formally each school term.
5. Tuition continues until the pupil is able to return to school at which point the tuition is usually withdrawn.

TUITION DELIVERY

Once a tutor has been allocated, the tuition will be delivered in line with the normal school day and during term time. The tutor allocated to the case will make arrangements with the family for the tuition to take place at a convenient time and place.

The tuition can take place in the home, school, libraries, community hubs and youth centres. If tuition is being delivered in the home, an appropriate adult should also be present for safeguarding reasons.

Usually 10 hours per week of face-to-face medical tuition is available backed up through access to an online learning package (NISAI). The level of support is dependent on the child's individual circumstances.

All members of the Medical Tuition Service Team are qualified teachers with previous experience of working in educational settings.

SUPPORT FOR PREGNANT SCHOOL GIRLS AND YOUNG MUMS

The Warrington Medical Tuition Service also provides support for pregnant school girls and young mothers in the same way as it does for children with medical needs. However, girls are encouraged to remain at school for as long as they can as tuition is not generally provided until around 6 weeks before the pupil's due date. Some pupils continue to study in school beyond this point.

Pregnant school girls are entitled to 10 hours of medical tuition support per week which lasts for a 12 week period in total (usually 6 weeks before the pupil's due date and 6 weeks after the birth). Young mothers are expected to return to school once they are fit to do so, but attendance is tailored to fit individual circumstances and, for most pupils, will involve a gradual reintroduction to school to allow both mother and baby to adjust.

Warrington Medical Tuition Service only provides support for pregnant school girls during their maternity leave for pupils who attend local authority schools.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

All pupils receive support from the service in the knowledge that their ultimate goal should be to return to school as soon as their health permits. Most pupils are able to return to full time education once their convalescence is over.

Should special arrangements be advised by health professionals, then school and the tutor, in consultation with parents, will ensure they are put in place. However, if the necessary arrangements are complex or the pupil has emotional difficulties and is anxious, the tutor may make arrangements for a supported return to school.

Following consultation with pupil, parent, school and service an individual programme of gradual reintegration will be arranged and tailored to the pupil's needs. Tutors often provide tuition sessions on the school site or in-class support, as a means of helping their pupils gradually adjust to the school environment.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Further information can be obtained by contacting:

- Warrington Medical Tuition Service
Telephone: 01925 446174
Email: millie.webster@warrington.gov.uk
Address: Medical Tuition Service, Education Services, 2nd Floor, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH
- Warrington's Local Offer, 'Ask Ollie', is available at www.warrington.gov.uk/localoffer